
WEAPONS &
AMMO SAFETY

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INTRODUCTION

The importance of attention to detail and the avoidance of complacency when using weapons and pyrotechnics in garrison and tactical environments is paramount.

OBJECTIVE

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***Apply RISK MANAGEMENT* to Weapons, Ammunition* and Range Operations for *ACCIDENT PREVENTION*.**

*** Ammunition includes pyrotechnics**

REASONS FOR ERRORS

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The major underlying reasons for errors related to all accidents and injuries are:

- **Lack of self-discipline.**
- **Failure to enforce standards.**
- **Inadequate training.**

WEAPONS

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Most common injury-producing areas in the handling of weapons:

- **Failure to follow procedures**
- **Improper or inadequate clearing**
- **Untimely loading/unloading**

WEAPONS

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Most common injury-producing areas in the handling of weapons (Continued):

- Personnel in the path of recoil or back-blast
- Fratricide

Mission: Conduct tube wear test

24 Jun 99

Hazards

- Improper body position
- Not following proper misfire procedures
- Unqualified personnel conducting duties

Results

- 1 Fatality

Controls

- Maintain proper body position
- Ensure compliance with SOP

SCENARIO

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While on deployment in Albania, a junior officer was in his barracks room handling another officer's 9mm weapon when it accidentally discharged, striking him in the left thigh.

RESULT

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The soldier was transported to an allied medical facility *where he underwent surgery for amputation*. The round had severed his femoral artery.

FACTORS

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Factors Leading To The Injury:

- Failure to follow procedures
- Improper or inadequate clearing

AMMUNITION

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Most common injury-producing areas in the handling of ammunition & pyrotechnics:

- **Failure to properly observe safety features**
- **Improper procedures**
- **Improper attention**
  - in the recoil or back-blast area

AMMUNITION

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Most common injury-producing areas in the handling of ammunition & pyrotechnics:

- **Detonating a "found" simulator**
- **Faulty simulator - premature or inadvertent discharge**

SCENARIO

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After conducting defensive operations during a JRTC rotation, an experienced infantry NCO handled an artillery simulator in an unauthorized manner.

The NCO punctured a simulator, poured the powder onto the ground and ignited the powder with a lighter.

RESULT

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As a result, the NCO received burns to his hand, head and his right eye resulting in *permanent loss of vision*.

FACTORS

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Factors Leading to the Injury:

- Failure to properly observe safety features
- Improper procedures

RANGE OPERATIONS

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Most common injury-producing areas in range operations:

- **Demolitions**
- **Inadequate training**
- **Target misidentification and negligent discharge**

RANGE OPERATIONS

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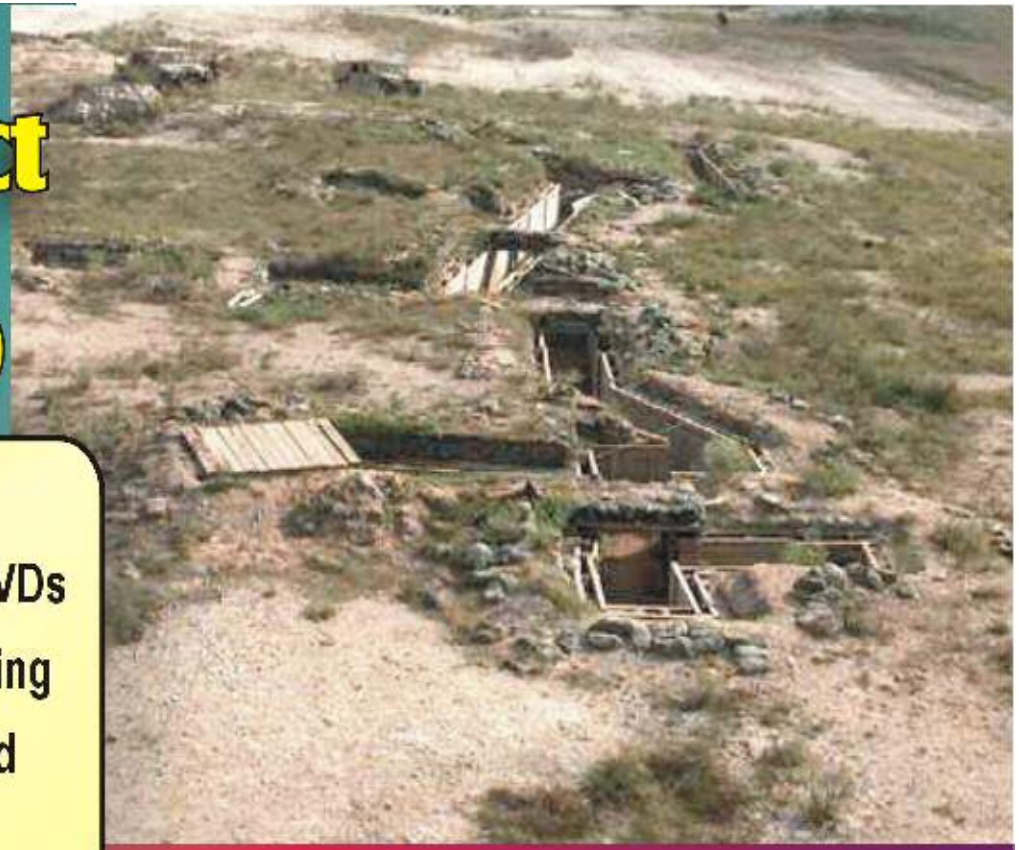
Most common injury-producing areas in range operations: (continued):

- Inadequate planning
- Inadequate supervision

Mission: Conduct Night Live Fire (From Trench Line)



Hazards

- Soldiers not having confidence in NVDs
- Not identifying targets before engaging
- Sectors of fire not clearly established
- Range fan markers not visible

Controls

- Train soldiers on NVD use and limitations
- Positive ID of targets prior to engagement
- Establish specific individual sectors of fire in compliance with range SOPs and STPs
- Adequately illuminate range fan limits

Results

- 1 Fatality

FACTORS

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Factors Leading To The Fatality:

- Inadequate training
- Target misidentification & negligent discharge
- Failure to follow procedures
- Failure to enforce standards

Personnel were burning excess artillery propellant bags. There was a HMMWV parked about 9 ft from the burn site. The heat from the fire induced a low-order detonation of a 155 mm "HE" round that was in the vehicle.

RESULT

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Fire/detonation destroyed:

- HMMWV
- SINGARS Radios
- M2 Compass
- Bayonets
- Star clusters
- OVM Bag
- 2 M16 Rifles
- AN/PVS7A NVDs
- M2 Aiming Circle
- Propellant bags
- Canvas
- Personal Equip

REQUIREMENTS

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AR 385-63 prescribes Department of the Army and Marine Corps range safety policies, procedures, responsibilities, and standards for firing ammunition, guided missiles, and large rockets.

POLICY

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The safe conduct of soldiers firing, detonating explosives, and maneuvering on ranges is a command responsibility.

POLICY

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- The safe conduct of soldiers firing, detonating explosives, and maneuvering on ranges is a command responsibility.

- Any individual observing a dangerous firing condition will immediately announce a cease-fire.

REQUIREMENTS

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Commanders At All Levels With A Mission Involving Ranges Will:

- **Ensure a range safety program is established**
- **Comply with range accident prevention policies**

These are accomplished through the appointment of OICs and RSOs.

REQUIREMENTS

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Who Can Be An OIC?

AR 385-63, Table 4-1
lays out rank requirements for different types of ranges.

Example: an artillery range requires an officer, warrant officer or an NCO with a rank of E-7 or above.

REQUIREMENTS

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Who Can Be An RSO?

AR 385-63 Table 4-1 lays out rank requirements for different types of ranges.

Example: a live-fire exercise using organic weapons, squad through Company/Battery/Troop requires an officer, warrant officer or an NCO with a rank of E-6 or above.

GUIDELINES

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Range Safety Certification Programs

Range safety certification programs programs will be used to train and qualify personnel in the duties of OIC and RSO for firing exercises and/or maneuver operations.

WAVIERS

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Waivers And Exemptions

Waivers may be granted based on critical mission requirements that cannot be met by any other means.

WAVIERS

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Waivers And Exemptions

The following personnel are granted waiver authority:

- MACOM commanders
- Superintendent, U.S. Military Academy
- Chief, National Guard Bureau (NGB)
- USMC commanding generals

REPORTING

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Accident & Malfunction Reporting

- Accidents will be reported IAW AR 385-40.
- Malfunctions will be reported IAW AR 75-1.

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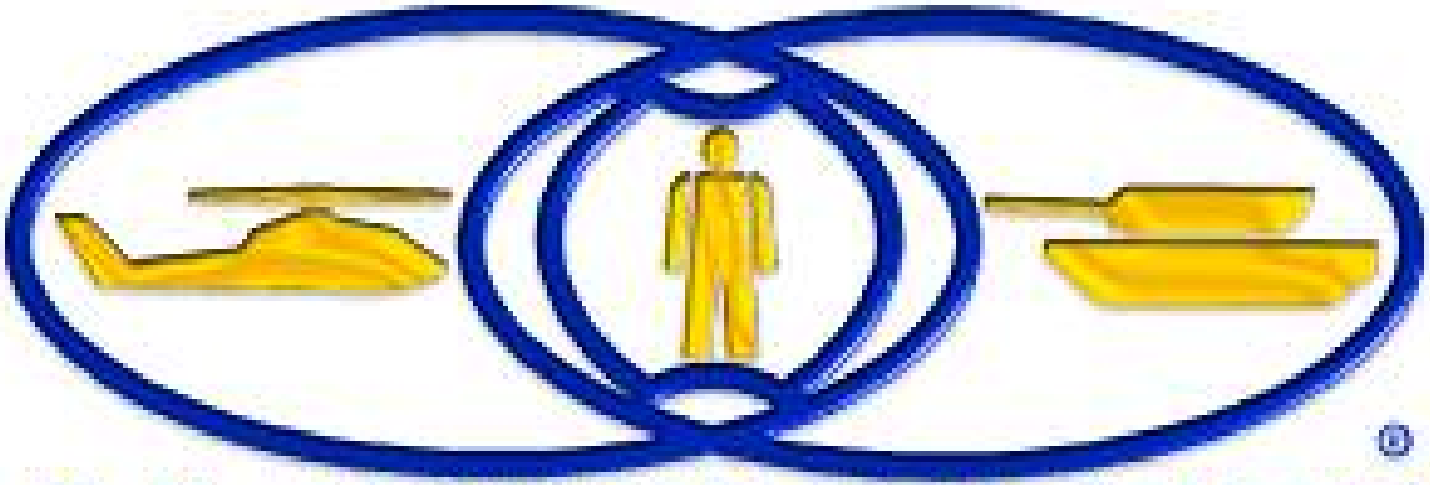
SUMMARY

QUESTIONS?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